

C. Claims

Please cancel claim 7 without prejudice or disclaimer and amend claims 1 and 8 as follows. A complete listing of all the claims appears below; this listing replaces all earlier amendments and listings of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A printing apparatus which divides a printing area in a scanning direction on a printing medium into a plurality of regions and has a print buffer for storing ~~column~~ raster data corresponding to the divided regions ~~in order to print by scanning a printhead on the printing medium, a size of the raster data stored in the print buffer being smaller than a size of image data to be printed by one scanning,~~ comprising:

input means for sequentially inputting block data corresponding to the divided regions and having a plurality of rasters;

acquisition means for acquiring N-bit raster data from the block data input to said input means;

conversion means for converting the raster data into column data;

transfer means for sequentially transferring the raster data acquired by said acquisition means to said conversion means;

second transfer means for sequentially transferring N column data converted by said conversion means to the print buffer;

storage means for storing the N column data transferred from said second transfer means in the divided regions of the print buffer; and

control means for executing transfer processing of said transfer means, transfer processing of said second transfer means, and conversion processing of said conversion means in synchronism with a predetermined signal.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the block data contains a plurality of color component data, and the divided region is further divided into second regions in correspondence with the number of color components.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the block data contains a code representing a data delimiter between first color component data and second color component data.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said acquisition means outputs a second predetermined signal to said conversion means when the code is determined.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said conversion means comprises holding means for holding N raster data transferred from said transfer means, and performs longitudinal/lateral conversion processing after said holding means holds the N raster data.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said conversion means comprises holding means for holding N raster data transferred from said

transfer means, and when the second predetermined signal is input while said holding means holds M ($M < N$) raster data, sets (N-M) "0" data in said holding means and then performs longitudinal/lateral conversion processing.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A printer driver executable in a host computer which outputs printing data to a printing apparatus ~~in order to print by scanning a printhead on a printing medium,~~ which divides a printing area in a scanning direction on a printing medium into a plurality of regions and has a print buffer for storing raster data corresponding to the divided regions, size of the raster data stored in the print buffer being smaller than size of image data to be printed by one scanning, comprising:

a generation step of generating a plurality of block data corresponding to the divided regions ~~obtained by dividing a printing area by one scanning on the printing medium into the plurality of regions in a scanning direction;~~ and having a plurality of rasters; and

an output step of sequentially outputting the block data generated in the generation step in correspondence with a direction in which the printhead scans.

9. (Previously Presented) The driver according to claim 8, wherein the block data contains first color data, second color data, and a color change code between the first color data and the second color data.

10. (Previously Presented) The driver according to claim 9, further comprising a compression step of compressing the first color data and the second color data by a predetermined compression method.